

## THE SUN FLOWER STATE.

A Trump up Charge—Colored Citizens at the Mercy of a Mob—A Lesson for Lynchers—New paper Comment.

Kansas City, Kans., Special—The daily papers of Kansas City, Mo., were out in large black letters July 12th inst. telling of a great crime that had been committed on the night of July 10th. they charged that a young man and young woman having spent the evening at Troost Park were returning home at about 11 o'clock. At 19th and Woodland, it is claimed, in a thickly populated neighborhood, on a street car line, two Negroes repeatedly beat the white man, Vernon Newton, with clubs until he fell unconscious, while a third Negro dragged the young woman, Grace Davis, several hundred yards to a vacant lot where he outraged her. This all, it was said, took place in sight of several persons in that neighborhood. The arrest of two black boys were mentioned in the same issues of the papers. This was, if true, a piece of criminality before unheard of. The charge created the greatest sensation. The Negroes hung their heads and wondered. Some said from first that it could not be true; that on the face of it was shown an impossibility. But the greater number thinking the story too great for fabrication could only hope "something may occur to clear the race of the charge."

The whites, on the other hand looked mean and threateningly. There were murmurs and signs of trouble that reached into Kansas. The peace officers saw signs of gathering trouble and began to make preparations to meet it. By 10 o'clock the crowd near the jail was large, though it made no attempt to storm the jail. Many Negroes were out also; the greater number of whom were armed, some openly.

The would-be mob soon found excuse to attack the Negroes, who made a brave defense but were out numbered and forced to retire. Several on both sides were injured. The mob(?) then began an organized pursuit for Negroes going even into hotels for them; they demolished The Douglass Club and drove Negroes from night wagons destroying and scattering the food. The officers did all they could to keep the peace and check the disturbance, but could do little with so large a crowd.

When daylight came the morning of the 13th Kansas City breathed easier. The officers were glad that their prisoners were not taken and the city that a crime was not laid at her door. An early hearing was given the accused men; at this time the man and woman had changed their testimony so much as to cause doubt to exist. They said the assault did not occur at 19th and Woodland but in the pasture where the young man and woman were sitting upon the ground with hats off. They said their reason for telling a false as to the location, was that they hoped to save scandal. They were contradicted by other white witnesses. The young woman said two of the Negroes was not nearer to her than twelve feet and she could tell that they Negroes; the officers who visited the pasture, a short time after the assault was said to have been committed, that it was impossible to identify a person as to color, so dark was it. Another white man testified that early in the evening he saw three white men following persons whom he believes to be this same couple, that the men were angry, one was on a bicycle who said that he would head them

off and "beat the stuffing out of him." There is said to be evidence that will prove that the men who beat the young man were the father, brother and cousin of the girl and that the girl was not assaulted.

At the close of the hearing the two Negroes were turned loose. The preliminary was largely attended by Negroes who were very demonstrative when the testimony tended to show the innocence of the Negroes. The Negroes were defended by W. H. Payne and two white lawyers; the former made a strong fight. The Kansas City, Mo., Star had the following editorial, at the close of the trial and before the Negroes had been turned loose:

## A LESSON AGAINST MOB VIOLENCE

The reasonable doubt that has been raised as to whether Negroes participated at all in the assault upon young Newton and Miss Davis ought to cause satisfaction among the people of this city that no violence was done to the colored men arrested in connection with that affair. There are people in Kansas City who have harrowing memories of the hanging of an innocent man by a mob here some years ago. Such outbreaks are horrible enough when mistakes are made in the victims, but they are frightful blot upon the good name of a community when innocent lives are sacrificed.

The Negroes now in custody upon a charge of having assaulted Mr. Newton and Miss Davis may be guilty, but reasonable misgivings have arisen as to whether the offenders were black men. Until these doubts are removed there can be no conclusive evidence against the suspects in custody. It is well for the public to remember that the first accounts of any tragedy or mishap may be misleading. Innocent people may easily be involved by circumstantial evidence, mistaken identity or wilful misrepresentation.

The danger about mobs is that they act upon impulse and upon a much lower plane of reasoning than would govern the average individual of the same mob if acting independently. It is better to let a dozen guilty persons go free than to make an innocent individual suffer. The law's delay is sometimes irksome, but it is less deplorable than a mob's mistakes.

## "The City by the Seaside."

This is the title of a most catchy and popular song and chorus written by Mr. R. P. Leftridge of this city. It is based on the news item which went the rounds of the press a week ago about the colored bathers and the objection of white people to them. It has been set to music and already the quartets in and around Washington are making a welkin ring with its melody. It will be on sale at an early date. Orders will be supplied by Mr. R. P. Leftridge, 1423 Pierce Place.

Keep Yourself in Your Place.

Editor The Colored American—There is one or two things that it would be well for you to state through your paper to the masses of the Negro race and something that will do a great deal towards lightening the Negro's burdens in this country. First they must learn that it is education and money that makes a man in this country and not fine clothes and insolence. And above all things the Negro must learn that no man has a right to shove himself socially where his society is not wanted.

READER.

Chicago, Ill., July 27 1901.

Owing to an oversight the locals of the Amphions did not appear last Saturday. But they go to Indian Head and land at Nottley Hall in time to enjoy Montgomery's Orchestra and the special program prepared by the Amphions.

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